U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alpena FRO Accomplishment Report

Partnerships and Accountability

Fisheries Vision for the Future presented to Cheboygan Sportfishing Association

Alpena FRO Biologist Anjanette Bowen presented the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future (Vision) at the monthly meeting of the Cheboygan Area Sportfishing Association on January 20 in Cheboygan, MI. The presentation reviewed components of the Vision and provided a stepdown plan of activities to be conducted by Service Fishery Offices in Michigan over the next 5 years. The presentation was one in a series of similar presentations to the Service's partner natural resource agencies that seeks to familiarize those agencies with our strategic plan, encourage their feedback and recommendations, and enhance partnership efforts for effective management of Great Lakes fisheries and aquatic resources. Attendants were pleased with the progress the Service has made regarding sea lamprey control and interest was expressed in partnering with projects in the future. Additional feedback on the Vision is expected. Partnerships and accountability are major elements of the Service's Fishery Program Vision for the Future.

Anjanette K. Bowen

Distribution of Alpena FRO Monthly Accomplishment Report

Assistant Project Leader Tracy Hill, working with the entire Alpena FRO staff, developed a distribution list for the station's Monthly Accomplishment report. This report is a compilation of Accomplishment Reporting System submissions from the Alpena FRO staff is organized around the seven themes of the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future, and provides a monthly overview of Alpena FRO activities. The list consisted of partners and friends of the Alpena FRO with an interest in the natural resources of the Great Lakes. One hundred and nineteen individuals were contacted to determine if they would prefer to receive the report on a regular basis. The plan is to provide interested partners with an electronic copy of future accomplishment reports. The purpose of the reports is to ensure that our partners and the American taxpayers are aware of the activities that engage us as we carry out the mission of the Fisheries program.

Tracy D. Hill

ARS summaries provided to Michigan congressional offices

The Alpena FRO is in the process of developing an external distribution list for its monthly Accomplishment Reporting System (ARS) summary. As part of the effort Project Leader McClain made contact with and scheduled meetings with District Office staffs of Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow and Congressman Bart Stupak.

McClain met with Ms. Sue Norkowski on January 23 at Congressman Stupak's Alpena office. Later during the same day, Mr. Harold Chase of Senator Levin's and Mr. Brandon Fewins of Senator Stabenow's Traverse City offices met with McClain and Assistant Project Leader Hill at the FRO. In all cases the aids requested email notification of the monthly summaries to enable them to remain current on our activities. McClain offered the opportunity for the district aids to join the Alpena FRO staff for field activities to better familiarize themselves with our program and the issues that we are involved in. Mr. Fewins and Mr. Chase both expressed interest in doing so in the upcoming field season. Outreach is a critical component of the Service's Fisheries Program strategic planning process. Developing and maintaining partnerships with natural resource agency biologists, local conservation groups and congressional offices all rely on effective communication. Providing monthly summaries of station activities is an excellent way for our partners to remain current on our efforts.

Jerry R. McClain

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Great Lakes Captains Association Learn of Great Lakes ANS at Annual Meeting

The Great Lakes Captains Association invited the Alpena FRO to speak on aquatic nuisance species (ANS) at their 2004 Industry Days held in January at the Holiday Inn in Traverse City, Michigan. Biologist Bowen provided a PowerPoint presentation on ANS in the Great Lakes on January 23 - discussing the origin, current range, and problems associated with a variety of fish, mussel, planktonic, and plant invaders. Also discussed was what should be done in the event an ANS is discovered. Informational handouts were provided on a number of ANS. Over 100 attendants were present and the topic sparked a great deal of interest. Education and outreach are important components of the Fisheries Strategic Vision to provide Public Use and access to fishery information, and address the threats to Aquatic Species Conservation and Management.

Anjanette K. Bowen

Public Use

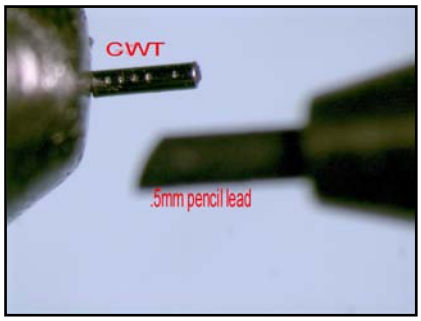
Aquatic Nuisance Species Information Provided to Alpena League of Women Voters

June Labadie of the Alpena, MI League of Women Voters contacted the Alpena FRO to gather information about Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) in the Great Lakes for their January 20 meeting. In a phone interview, Mrs. Labadie asked about the current status, threats, and harmful effects of Asian carp, zebra mussels, Eurasian ruffe, and round goby in the Great Lakes. Information was also requested on the vectors of introduction and spread for these species. Public education and outreach are an important component of the Service's Fishery Program Vision for the Future.

Anjanette K. Bowen

Cooperation with Native Americans

2003 Coded-Wire-Tag Data Compiled



In January 2003 Fishery Biologist Aaron Woldt compiled lake trout coded-wire-tag (CWT) data for submission to the common Lake Huron Technical Committee (LHTC) CWT database. The common database was created in 1999 and includes lake trout CWT return data from 5 partner agencies (Michigan DNR, Chippewa/Ottawa Resource Authority (CORA), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, USGS Biological Resources Division (BRD), and the Service). CWTs are microscopic tags placed in the snouts of hatchery lake trout prior to stocking. Tags are extracted from lake trout at the time of harvest and yield information such as hatchery of origin, year planted, fish age, and fish strain. The Alpena FRO captures CWT lake trout in its fishery independent lake whitefish surveys and its mid-lake lake trout surveys. Recreationally caught CWT lake trout sampled by Michigan DNR creel clerks and head hunters and survey caught CWT lake trout sampled by CORA are also processed by the Alpena FRO. Woldt summarized all CWT returns processed by the Alpena FRO in 2003. CWTs were extracted and read by Fishery Biologists Scott Koproski and Adam Kowalski. Woldt formatted all data to conform to common database standards developed by the LHTC and forwarded Alpena FRO data to Scott Nelson of USGS BRD in Ann Arbor for inclusion in the common database. The common database is used by members of the LHTC to evaluate lake trout movement, strain survival, effects of quality at release on survival, and effectiveness of the northern and mid-lake refuges. Biologist Woldt will use the LHTC common database to update his analysis of Lake Huron lake trout movement for oral and written presentation at the 2004 Upper Lakes Meeting. Movement results will also be used to update lake trout catch-at-age models used to set harvest limits in 1836 Treaty waters. Capturing, processing, and analyzing lake trout CWT returns directly supports lake trout rehabilitation by allowing agencies to assess lake trout movement patterns, differences in strain survival, effects of hatchery practices, and effectiveness of refuges. CWT analysis also affects population models used to set sustainable lake trout harvest limits for 1836 Treaty waters. These outcomes are consistent with the Service's goal of building and maintaining self-sustaining populations of native fish species while meeting the needs of tribal communities.

Aaron P. Woldt

Leadership in Science and Technology

Gill Net Construction

During the month of January, Fishery Biologists Scott Koproski and Adam Kowalski began building gill nets that will be used for assessment work in the 2004 field season. A total of 4,500 feet of net need to be constructed to ensure that Alpena FRO staff will be able to perform all work scheduled for this year. Most of the nets being constructed will be used during fishery independent lake whitefish assessments in 1836 Treaty Ceded waters. Five 100 foot long panels will be constructed for the following stretch mesh sizes:

2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.5, and 6.0 inch. In January, Biologists Koproski and Kowalski built 1,000 feet of net. The new nets will compliment the existing inventory and will ensure constant fishability of gear during all Alpena FRO surveys. Most of the gill nets being constructed will be used during fishery independent lake whitefish surveys in 1836 Treaty waters. The fishery independent lake whitefish surveys were developed by the Modeling Subcommittee of the Technical Fisheries Committee and aid in establishing harvest limits for lake whitefish populations in 1836 Treaty Ceded waters. The Alpena FRO is responsible for assessing two lake whitefish management units in Lake Huron. This work helps fulfill the Service's obligations as a signatory to the 2000 Consent Decree for effective management of the shared fisheries in Lake Huron.

Scott R. Koproski

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Saginaw Bay Watershed Assessment Workgroup

On January 9, the Saginaw Bay Watershed Barrier Assessment Workgroup held their first meeting in Lansing, Michigan. Biologist Wells participated in this meeting by conference call as a member of the workgroup. The workgroup was formed to oversee a feasibility study being conducted within the Saginaw Bay Watershed. The study will be looking at fish passage options within the watershed and identify the most cost effective restoration opportunities to promote self sustaining populations of native fish. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish Passage Program provided funding for this feasibility study. Scheduled completion of the study is August of 2004. Evaluation of the Dow and Chesaning dams will be completed first. Fish passage in the Saginaw River watershed is listed as a top priority in Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Saginaw Bay Walleye Recovery Plan. A private fish passage design consultant will be hired to design a structure that will pass native fish through the city of Frankenmuth. The city has expressed interest in such a project and is willing to work with the group. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Public Sector Consultants, City of Frankenmuth, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are participants on the workgroup. This is an example of collaboration between federal, state and local governments to enhance aquatic habitat, will foster positive working relationships and benefit fish and wildlife resources. This project is a priority for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Lake Huron Basin Team. They have identified this watershed as a valuable resource for walleye reproduction in the Lake Huron basin.

Susan E. Wells

Misery Bay 319 Planning Grant

Alpena FRO Partners for Fish and Wildlife Coordinator Heather Enterline met with North-East Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) representative Richard Deuell on January 15 to discuss the Misery Bay 319 Planning Grant. Misery Bay is a small bay just north of Thunder Bay in Lake Huron. This bay is rich in biodiversity, and has been listed as a 1998 SOLEC Biodiversity Investment Area (BIA). The coastal mashes, wet meadows, northern fens and conifer swamps are habitat for federally endangered species such as the dwarf lake iris and Hines emerald dragonfly. The shoreline is etched with cliffs, karst features and a large spring coming from a sinkhole in

the bay is an outlet for an underground river. Approximately 213 migratory bird species are known to use this area as a stopover site during migration. Mr. Deuell met with Enterline to discuss the current status of the 319 grant, potential habitat restoration projects, and to discuss general knowledge of the bay, including fisheries use, endangered species, and habitat requirements for these flora and fauna. Service resource concerns in Misery Bay, particularly fisheries use and potential benefit to the fishery were discussed with several biologists from the Alpena FRO. Coordination with NEMCOG so early in the planning process will only benefit the process as a whole. Concerns with Endangered Species habitat were directed to the East Lansing Field Office.

Heather L. Enterline

Accomplishment Archive